



Universal Acceptance Day Uruguay - May 26, 2025

Contribution of UASG, its challenge and way ahead

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First of all I would like to wish a universal day 2025 to all residents of Uruguay and thank you very much for ISOC Uruguay for inviting me and giving me an opportunity to talk to all of you. First of all I would like to thank my previous speaker Rodrigo who was speaking in Spanish but I understand that he has introduced the UA to the audience. Thank you, thank you very much.

Now, in the whole world there are around 7000 languages. In the whole world we have more than 7000 languages which are spoken at present in addition to English and there are more than 20000 dialects which are being spoken today. We have seen that more than 53% of the world population do not converse in English. It means that total Internet which is there available in the globe today is 5.5 billion and 2.6 billion people are there which are unconnected with the Internet.

Now let us talk about those who are connected with Internet also. You must have seen this screen where large number of people are speaking language which is other than English and the people who are not connected are specifically in Asia,

Pacific region, Asia region and Africa region. So what we are looking today is a scenario where we would like to make Internet barrier free language free and bring all the people to the fold of Internet. It means that 1 billion next Internet users are expected to come from those non-English speaking people.

Let me introduce the concept of universal acceptance.

Now, if we see what is universal acceptance, what we are talking today, Universal Acceptance Day. We are talking that if a domain, top level domain, which comes after dot, like dot com, dot net, dot in, dot ur. If it is more than three characters, for example, here it is shown site.example. This is a UA problem because all hardware and software are not able to accept this. Similarly, in case a domain is other than ASCII or English, then also it is a UA problem. Similarly, in Urdu and Arabic, in English or other language, we are writing from left to right. In Urdu or Arabic, we are writing from right to left. So that problem is also UA problem.

So basically, if all the domains and all emails, if they get accepted uniformly across all Internet, hardware, software programs, then UA problem get resolved. This is what we are working on it. And ICANN started delegating IDN, which Raj was talking earlier to me, from 2003. But they understand that universal acceptance is a very important to make all Internet, one Internet, one word. And Internet should reach to every citizen of this globe. They formed a universal acceptance steering group in 2015. Today, we are celebrating 10 years of universal acceptance steering group.

And this is what, in a nutshell, in one slide, we are putting how, what we have done. We worked with six working groups. Okay. And we have spent around 650 plus hours of working group meetings. During this, we have developed 25 videos, 80 plus blogs, 100 plus URAD websites. But important is that we have developed and published 50 documents, which includes the UA testing and framework, if the UA problem is there, gap analysis is there, how to resolve those gap analysis. Okay.

And also providing the free code samples and self-hosting working AI system to the world. We have done case studies to see whether UA is getting properly implemented or not. And most important thing, what we did today is that we started a UA day from 2023. And this is the third version of UA day, which we are celebrating across the world. Okay.

So if you see the UA day, 167 UA day events have reached more than 21,300 people over the three years. And it is continued because the last day of the UA day celebration for this year is end of this month.

Now, what we have achieved, we have achieved that more than 150 top level domains are today IDN domains. and 4 million second level domains are IDN second level domains. And around 14% of the websites are now supporting universal acceptance. And around 27% of emails are fully or partially supporting the universal acceptance. So this is what we have achieved. Okay.

So we have worked hard in the last 10 years and we are still working, but the important message, which I want to give to all of you today is that we have made it possible that UA is a problem, but there are solutions to the UA, which are practical and people who want to make their Internet system UA ready, their websites UA ready, their emails UA ready. There are solutions which are available. Okay. And I would like to have them also in the chat. All of you can use the link I have on ICANN and you can use the efforts of UASG for the last 10 years reaching to USG.tech website and take advantage and make your system as UA ready?

Next slide, please. Now let us look at that. Yes, we are 10 years and we are able to achieve a good, but there is a long road which is yet to be traveled. to make it possible that every citizen of this globe are able to use Internet in their own language. Now this is what we are saying, multilingual domain names and email addresses for the community to register and use, allowing for more digital inclusion.

Now this is what I said that around 14% of the websites which we have measured in the last year are supporting. So basically you can say that 86% of the websites are still there which require to be UA ready. Now this is the major challenge which we have.

And if we see this same figure which I said. Around 26.79% of the EAI that is email which are UA ready and partially or fully. It means that still there are around 74-73% of the emails which are not supporting UA. So there is a big gap and this is what we have to work together to see that it works well.

Lets us see which are the technology, which are the stacks, which we are working and which are required to make the system UA ready.

So if you see this, we are working for applications and websites, social media and search engines, programming languages and frameworks, platforms, operating systems and system tools. So if you see this we are working for applications and websites. Then we are also making the standard software and software applications. and best practices which are already need to be checked and fixed at

multiple level of the technology. This is not an easy job and this is I think we have to work very seriously to ensure that Internet actually is being used fully by everybody.

Recently, we have conducted a survey for 2000 websites out of which around 1000 websites are country specific. For example, those websites are basically used within a country and there are 1000 websites which are global websites. For example, any websites which are dealing in multi-country situation. Now here there are. Results which are there. We have taken Brazil for example for the country specific website and we have taken the acceptance for the various global websites also. You must have seen that good number of websites are reaching to the level of 96%, 99% also and that is what we are aiming that we should have a situation when we should be able to reach. To each and every person across the globe.

Now the question comes that whenever we are talking about the UA, any company is asking that why should I convert my Internet system as a universal acceptance because it takes time. It involves money and whether after converting that system into UAD what I am going to gain.

That is what I can study. In 2017 and we found that if you convert your system as a UAD there is a business opportunity of 9.8 plus billion. Now this is around 8 years back. Right now ICANN is in the process of undertaking this study again and we hope that this figure will cross 100 billion opportunity. It means that if you are able to convert your website. Or your email in local language, then you will be able to reach to those unconnected population those focus group which is not yet connected because they don't know English. They don't converse in English. So that is a big advantage which we can get. And for taking this you know we if you are UAD then we are competitive advantage you have social responsibility. You are able to develop the skill within yourself and you can talk to the global audience.

Now let us see few examples which we have. In India the government of India has converted their official website into multilingual. That is including Hindi and English. So we are able to reach out to those people. That is the way to compete. In India there are lots of sites which are not connected to the various benefits which government of India is providing. This site helps million of Indians users across the world.

Now let us look at that doing all of these things, what are the challenges which we are facing. The first challenge which the USG and ICANN is facing is the awareness. Awareness. Awareness that UA is a problem, awareness that there is a solution for

UA and how we have to move. That is why we have started a UA day program and we are happy that this UA day program is doing good.

Number two is incomplete implementation. It means that some big companies who have funds, they have expertise, they have skills, they are able to convert their system into UA. But small companies, they are not able to convert their system into UA. It means that when a user is using the system from a small company to a bigger company, they get error. So, unless the entire ecosystem gets converted into UA, then we are not able to get the benefits of UA.

Then there is a problem because at the college level also. We are in academia, we are not able to teach Internet governance and when we are teaching Internet governance, the universal acceptance is not yet part of the curriculum. So that is what we thought that there should be a focus group where ICANN should concentrate.

One is that we feel that government is an organization which influences most citizens in their country. So, government should be motivated to adopt UA, to implement UA in their own systems. Number two, big techs, which are the big techs, Apples, Google, Facebook. These are the big techs which are touching the lives of global people in billions every day. We should ensure that these big techs should have a long-term strategy. In their long-term strategy, UA should be a part of it.

Third, we are talking about the DNS system. It means the registries, means who are managing the TLDs, CCTLDs and GTLDs, the backend registries who are actually managing the entire domain system, registrars and registrants. They should convert their system into UA. ICANN has given an example of its own. And they have converted most of their system as the UA ready as on date. I think what is required that multifunctional people should come together and should work to ensure that UA gets implemented.

Next slide, please. So, there is a call to action which we are supporting. One is for the businesses. SS. SS, if your business systems are compliant with UA standard. If they are not, then there are solutions which are available with us. Please take it and convert your system as UA ready, the website as well as email.

The governments evaluate the possibility of including UA requirement in government procurement. Because China has done it. India is in the process of doing it. Because government does it. The government precovers maximum from

the field. And in case we ensure that all vendors their system are UA ready. Then, the message will go very clearly. SS.

Create a UA awareness for example, for ISAJC, there you were doing a good job. Ouru Goye, congratulations to all of you. SS. Create a UA awareness with partner organizations and companies to update their system to current globally inclusive standards.

And finally, for the academia, I just want to inform, for the benefit of all of you, that UASG has prepared a UA curricula for the academia, and we are experimenting at Bahrain, we are talking at various countries, including India, and we hope that in the next one or two years, at least few countries should start adopting the UA academy curricula. If we are able to educate and make the young population aware about UA, then future, in case they are going to make programs, they are going to make apps, then taking UA should not be a problem for them.

So this is what I just wanted to give message to all of you. I just want that all of you, we have some few more days with us for UA. This is the UA Day celebration. Wherever UA Day is there, this is available on the website. You can check the universalacceptance.day. Please join whenever it is possible. It benefits all of us and the future generation. Thank you very much. In case there are any questions and answers, I am ready for it. I stop here. Thank you.